

The Nine Lives of Sable

Pythagoras once said,

"All things change, nothing perishes. The soul passes from one body to another".

Given his achievements, I am not surprised he uncovered a truth most humans choose to ignore.

I am now well into my ninth life. However, nearing the end of this body's lifespan, I feel that my soul will not be passed to another vessel. So, as I write this autobiography, I intend to take you, dear reader, on my own time machine.

Hunt. Eat. Survive. Repeat. Beneath the Mesozoic sun, I thought my first life, as a dinosaur, would remain the same. But the sea began to rise. Volcanoes spewed hot lava. The air grew crisp and hard to swallow. One night, I saw a glowing bug in the sky. Curious, I followed it, waiting eagerly for it to come down. Then it did. It came hurtling down with millions of other fiery creatures, and my world was engulfed in darkness.

I was reborn the daughter of a merchant, surrounded by imported linen, wafting spices, and fine jewellery. As time passed, I longed for my own set of pearls and fancy silks. One fateful morning, Baba and I were called to the palace to present a gift to the vizier's daughter. Kneeling below the nobility's thrones, Baba pulled out an opulent pendant cradling an onyx stone. I found my hand involuntarily reaching out, but before my fingers could clasp the pendant, I felt the searing pain from a soldier's arrow pierce my neck.

London claimed my third life, wrapping it in grey fog and smoke from ashen chimneys. I did not have a name, but people called me things like "Urchin" and "Orphan." It was a cruel world in the city that swallowed children up like puddles in the rain.

In my next life, I was born into a different world with etiquette, petticoats, and ballroom dancing. I seemed fortunate, but I was anything but that. I was my father's property and would soon become the belonging of some stranger, under the title of "wife." As my corset was tightened on my wedding day, I realised that the remainder of my life would be much like my waist. *Cinch, cinch, cinch*, until there is nothing left.

Reborn as a pirate, I roamed boisterously, battling rough seas, drowning in drink, and pillaging villages, all with the law nipping at our heels. My end was not as thrilling as my life. A sickness swept through the crew, leaving us coughing and spluttering. I was more unfortunate.

Born for the sixth time, I resided in a quiet monastery perched on mountaintops caked by snow. Monks would sit cross-legged for hours. We moved slowly through corridors, like whispered secrets. The only sign of time passing was the bells that tolled through the crisp mountain air daily. My life there was like a single moment stretched wide.

In my seventh life, my mornings began with the shrill shriek of a whistle, when I would catch the bus to the factory. With the hum of machines, my raw and cramped hands would work away for hours on end. The master gave us little food and sparse pay. My only solace was my family, with their tired smiles and warm embraces.

In my eighth life, I was blessed with gifted hands. My fingers danced across ivory and ebony keys, creating melodious symphonies. I began playing at smoky clubs filled with twirling glasses and tipped hats. Still, I longed for more, the piece that could carry the weight of my lives. I spent my life searching for such a song but never found it. In the end, I was laid to rest near the bayou, where the water sang unfinished notes.

In my final life, I was born fighting, with orange fur and a scrawny body. One by one, my siblings were picked up by loving hands, but one day two small arms reached out for me. My Clarissa loved me and gifted me the name "Sable."

I have grown old, a feeling I know all too well. One may ask, how can a dying feline know so much?

The answer is simple: the cat has always known more than man. Why else would they say, "A cat has nine lives"?

I will not miss this world, which has proven to me time and time again what a cold, hard place it can be.

But I will miss the soft touches that made it bearable.

Sable